



# 2007 Action Plan

## The CPMP

Annual Action Plan includes the [SF 424](#) and Narrative Responses to Action Plan questions that CDBG, HOME, HOPWA, and ESG grantees must respond to each year in order to be compliant with the Consolidated Planning Regulations. The Executive Summary narratives are optional.

## Narrative Responses

### GENERAL

#### **Executive Summary**

The Georgia Urban County Consortium [GUCC] consists of Cobb County, the City of Marietta [which is a participating Entitlement City] and Cherokee County. Cobb County and the GUCC are required to submit to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD] an Annual Action Plan for Program Year [PY] 2007 [year two of five for the PY 2006-2010 Consolidated Plan]. The PY 2007 Annual Action Plan is submitted as a prerequisite to receiving funds from the following programs: Community Development Block Grant [CDBG Program], HOME Investment Partnership Act [HOME] Program, the American Dream Downpayment Initiative [ADDI] Program, the Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS [HOPWA] Program, and the Emergency Shelter Grant [ESG] Program and emphasizes Cobb County and GUCC priorities when using these federal grant dollars.

The Action Plan must be submitted to HUD by November 15, 2006 and will provide direction for program activities funded during PY 2007. The plan is developed and administered by the Cobb County CDBG Program Office under the approval and direction of the County Manager and Cobb County Board of Commissioners.

#### **Cobb County At A Glance:**

- Almost 55,000 people in Cobb County live below the poverty level;
- 95,634 households have an income less than 80% of the median Cobb County income [Family of one median income- \$49,000; Family of four median income \$71,000];
- More than 3,200 elderly households pay more than 50% of their income for housing costs;
- There are more than 725 homeless men, women, and children in Cobb each day;
- More than 100,000 people in Cobb cannot read or speak English adequately to meet their job or every day living requirements;
- 77,862 Cobb residents have a physical handicap limiting their ability to use buildings and services;
- More than 28,000 homes in Cobb have a significant housing repair need (code violation);
- Cobb County's low and moderate income population is growing;

The PY 2007 Annual Action Plan outlines the proposed activities to be carried out by the Cobb County CDBG Program Office with the use of HUD funds and other funding sources. The proposed activities seek to address certain important housing and community development needs of its low and moderate income residents as defined in the PY 2006-2010 Strategic Plan. Those priority needs were established through the collaboration of citizens, public interest groups, non-profit organizations, government entities, and other stakeholders with Cobb and GUCC communities and are as follows:

**PY 2006-2010 Strategic Plan Goals:**

- Increase capacity of public facilities and public services to improve the non-housing social, economic, and physical environment of low and moderate income persons;
- Increase access to affordable housing for low and moderate income persons;
- Decrease substandard housing for low and moderate income individuals and families;
- Increase housing options and self-sufficiency for homeless and near homeless individuals and families;
- Increase housing and supportive services for individuals and families with special needs;

**Cobb County addresses the needs of its low and moderate income residents through investing in Public Facilities, Infrastructure, and Public Services by:**

- Renovating and Constructing County, City and Non-Profit Agency Facilities (senior centers, community centers, health centers, parks) supporting Low to Moderate Income Families;
- Installing new Infrastructure [water, sewer, streets, sidewalks] in Low to Moderate Income Areas;
- Renovating Public Facilities to provide services for homeless, Low to Moderate Income Persons and those with special needs;
- Supporting Non-Profit Organizations and their need for facilities, operating resources and equipment;
- Renovating or Constructing County Facilities to meet Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA] Requirements;

***Proposed PY 2007 CDBG Projects***

***Public Facilities***

*Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA] Improvements to Cobb County facilities*

*Renovation of The Center for Family Resources- Pre-Award Project*

*Ron Anderson Neighborhood Facility Expansion [Powder Springs]- Pre-Award Project*

*Collar Park Renovation [Austell]*

*Neighborhood Infrastructure and Trailway System, Phase II [Acworth]*

*Hickory Hills Park Acquisition [Marietta]- Pre-Award Project*

*Neighborhood Infrastructure [Smyrna]*

*Woodland Acres Infrastructure—Water and Sewer [Kennesaw]*

***Public Services (Non-Profit Organizations)***

*Marcus Jewish Community Center Housemate Match Housing Program*

*Franklin Road Boys and Girls Club Operations[Marietta]*

*Omosaze Reading/Literacy Services*

*SafePath Abused Children Services—Domestic Violence Eliminator Program Expansion*

*The Edge Connection Microenterprise Technical Assistance Program [Cobb and Marietta]*

**Cobb County increases access to Affordable Housing for low and moderate income persons by:**

- Offering First Time Homebuyer Downpayment Assistance;
- Providing homebuyer education to help families learn how to become homeowners;
- Subsidizing the development of affordable housing for homebuyers (acquisition and development grants);
- Promoting the elimination of impediment to fair housing and affordable housing;
- Supporting the maintenance of existing and development of new rental housing and development of needed transitional and permanent housing for the disabled and homeless;

*Cobb Housing, Inc. [CHI], a local nonprofit housing corporation and Cobb and Cherokee's sole Community Housing Development Organization [CHDO], builds affordable housing for low to moderate income families. PY 2007 Action Plan resources [HOME and ADDI] are proposed to help pay for operating costs, and for First Time Homebuyer Downpayment Assistance. CHI will receive \$440,000 in HOME grant funds to be used in acquiring and developing affordable housing in Cobb County, Marietta, and Cherokee County. CHI will build approximately 30 new units of affordable housing in PY 2007.*

*Cobb Habitat for Humanity buys and develops lots and tracts of land on which they build affordable housing. Sponsor organizations (churches, businesses) provide funds for the materials and some subcontractor expenses. Most of the labor is donated by volunteers. The cost of Habitat homes is 40% less than comparable market costs. All families will receive Downpayment Assistance. It is proposed that Cobb Habitat for Humanity will receive \$112,094 in HOME and ADDI Downpayment funding for their clients in PY 2007. Habitat will develop approximately 25 new units of affordable housing each year on property purchased with HOME funding.*

*Cobb County is providing local funding to support Atlanta Mutual Housing Association's efforts to gain State Tax Credits funding for the renovation of their Harbor Oaks Apartments Complex in Fair Oaks.*

*Cobb County is updating its Analysis to Impediments to Fair Housing.*

**Cobb County decreases substandard housing for low and moderate income individuals and families by:**

- Providing small grants and loans for emergency, life threatening/critical repairs;
- Rehabilitating housing code deficiencies and hazardous materials through zero interest, deferred payment loan financing;
- Providing zero-interest Deferred Payment Loans to complete major rehabilitation or reconstruction of seriously deteriorated homes;

*The Cobb County CDBG office operates a Housing Rehabilitation Program using CDBG and HOME funds and provides financial assistance (grant or deferred payment loans) for eligible homeowners in Cobb County based on the availability of Action Plan resources (grants, on a limited basis, are available only for families making 50% or less of the median income for Cobb County). The Cobb CDBG Office intends to partner with three organizations that will provide volunteer labor on emergency repair projects. These organizations are First Connection, World Changers, and Friends of Disabled Children and Adults. When lead or asbestos is determined to exist in homes, it is removed or abated to prevent occupants from exposure. The Program has abated hazardous materials from more than 140 homes in Cobb County.*

**Cobb County will support increasing housing options and self-sufficiency for homeless and near homeless individuals and families by:**

- Providing support through the ESG Program in emergency housing and supportive services for homeless families and individuals in Cobb;
- Providing support through the Supportive Housing Program for Transitional Housing operations and support services for homeless families and individuals while they work towards self-sufficiency;
- Provide services that will prevent persons released from institutions from entering homeless situations upon release;

*It is proposed that Traveler's Aid, The Extension, Inc. and Ministries United for Service and Training [MUST] will receive Emergency Shelter Grant funds for operations, essential services, and homeless prevention initiatives. Also, Turner Hill, Inc. will receive funds for their Prison Discharge Shelter and services.*

*SuperNOFA Resources: The CDBG Program assists local organizations to apply for HUD Supportive Housing funding each year for Transitional Housing, Shelter Plus Care, and support services.. Since 1995, local organizations have received more than \$15 million in funding for such activities and services through the SuperNOFA process. Last year's Supportive Housing Grant totaled \$1,545,000 and was awarded to MUST, Disabled American Vets, The Extension, Inc., Center for Family Resources, and the Marietta Housing Authority.*

**Cobb County will increase housing and supportive services for individuals and families with special needs by:**

- Renovating government facilities in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA] regulations including restroom upgrades, handrails, ramps at public facilities and county buildings, elevator modifications, and accessible water fountains;
- Providing funding for the purchase of vans for organizations to transport residents with physical limitations;
- Providing funds to organizations to address the needs of Adults with Disabilities
- Providing limited operating funds for organizations;

*In 2007, Cobb Senior Services will enhance the quality of life of Cobb's senior population by meeting their social, educational, and recreational needs through senior center facilities including an Adult Day Care, Meals on Wheels Program, Transportation Services, and In-Home Services.*

*In 2007, SafePath Children's Advocacy Center will expand their domestic violence response program thereby improving availability and accessibility of services to abused and neglected children.*

## General Questions

1. Describe the geographic areas of the jurisdiction (including areas of low income families and/or racial/minority concentration) in which assistance will be directed during the next year. Where appropriate, the jurisdiction should estimate the percentage of funds the jurisdiction plans to dedicate to target areas.

### **Cobb County Response:**

The Georgia Urban County Consortium consists of Cobb County [the lead agency], the City of Marietta and Cherokee County. In addition to Cobb County and the City of Marietta [which is a participating Entitlement City], there are five (5) municipalities within Cobb County which are cooperating cities – Acworth, Austell, Kennesaw, Powder Springs and Smyrna.

Cobb County's most notable population fluctuation in the 2000 Census was an increase in the ethnic/racial makeup within the County.

Table 1  
Cobb County Racial Break Down

Population Group	2000	% of Pop	2006 (Est.)	% of Pop.	2000-2006 % Change
Total Population	607,751		668,057		9
White	439,991	73.0	462,295	69.2	5.1
Black	114,233	18.9	132,943	19.9	16.4
Asian	18,587	3.0	24,050	3.6	24.4
Hispanic	46,964	8.0	66,138	9.9	41

Note: Percentages do not add to 100% due to overlap between race and ethnic classifications.

- ❑ The African-American population saw an increase between 1990 and 2000 of 158 percent, rising from 44,154 residents in 1990 to 114,233 in 2000. It is estimated that in 2006 there were 132,943 African-Americans living [19.9%] in Cobb County.
- ❑ The Asian population increased by 131 percent from 1990 to 2000. It is estimated that in 2006 there were 24,050 [3.6%] Asians living in Cobb County.
- ❑ Another trend toward diversity is reflected in the population of the County's Hispanic residents, with a 400 percent increase since the 1990 Census. Census 2000 recorded 46,964 Hispanic residents, and 2006 estimates reflect a Hispanic population of 66,138 or 9.9% of the county's population.

Cobb County is 340 square miles, and like most urban counties, has a more scattered low to moderate income population than many central cities. Low to moderate income families in Cobb County are largely found in the southwest areas of the County in Mableton, Austell and Powder Springs; in the Fair Oaks Community; the City of Smyrna; the City of Marietta; and in the north in the older neighborhoods in the Cities of Kennesaw and Acworth. In Cherokee County, the low to moderate income families are located primarily in the City of Canton and in the Waleska community (See Map 1 – Low to Moderate Income by Census Tract). Southwest Cobb contains a large percentage of minority residents. Within the cities of Smyrna and Marietta, including Fair Oaks, there is a high percentage of both African-

American and Hispanic populations (See Map 2 – African-American Population by Census Tract and Map 3 – Hispanic Population by Census Tract).

2. Describe the basis for allocating investments geographically within the jurisdiction (or within the EMSA for HOPWA) (91.215(a)(1)) during the next year and the rationale for assigning the priorities:

**Cobb County Response:**

Each of the five (5) cities receives a Fair Share Allotment of CDBG funds based on their percentage of the population in Cobb County minus the City of Marietta's population. The City of Marietta's population is not a part of this equation since it is a separate Entitlement city and receives its own HUD allocation. The oldest infrastructure and the higher concentrations of low income persons are found in Cobb's cities. The County supports the participating cities in their efforts to provide facilities and services that can improve the quality of life for eligible L/M recipients.

The Cobb County Housing Rehabilitation Program and First-Time Homebuyer activities of the CDGB/HOME/ADDI Programs operate on a county-wide basis due to the spatial de-concentration of low income persons throughout the County. Most work is done in primarily low to moderate income areas. Cobb County directs all of its CDBG, HOME/ADDI and ESG funds to low to moderate income residents. An exception is Marietta's Project MINT [Marietta Initiative for Neighborhood Transformation, which is currently focused in the low income neighborhoods of the City of Marietta adjacent to downtown.

Cobb County will provide Downpayment Assistance in the form of a zero-interest loan to first-time home buyers. The First-Time Homebuyer Program Downpayment Assistance is operated by Cobb Habitat for Humanity and Cobb Housing, Inc. Habitat for Humanity's emphasis will focus on their 51-unit Hillcrest Chase Subdivision in South Cobb. Cobb Housing, Inc. targets first time homebuyers in their 31-unit Mitchell Chase subdivision in Mableton.

Eligible residents living in Marietta may also seek program funding for moderate and substantial housing rehabilitation work and first time homebuyer assistance activities. The priority neighborhoods established by the Marietta City Council are the areas emphasized for investment through Project MINT. These are city-wide and include Fort Hill and Allgood neighborhoods. The Franklin Road and Hickory Hills Park neighborhoods will receive other CDBG assistance in 2007.

Under the HOME Program, funds are allocated to Marietta and Cherokee County using the HUD-developed allocation formula. This formula was updated by HUD in 2000 when Cherokee County was added to the Consortium. Cherokee County targets the elderly homeowners throughout the County through its single family housing rehabilitation program and supports Habitat for Humanity by purchasing sites for its housing.

Additional CDBG resources are allocated to Cobb non-profit organizations that serve low and moderate income residents seeking to start their own businesses, seniors needing housing, and abused spouses and children.

3. Describe actions that will take place during the next year to address obstacles to meeting underserved needs.



**Cobb County Response:**

The following are obstacles to meeting underserved needs in Cobb County:

- ❑ Reduced funding at the local, state and federal levels is a barrier to meeting the needs of Cobb County's low to moderate income residents. The local CDBG and HOME Programs experienced a reduction in funding in PY 2005 and PY 2006. However, local applications for funding continue to increase. The uncertain and possibly reduced appropriations for the CDBG, HOME and ESG Programs make it difficult to make long term commitments to programs in Cobb County and the GUCC. Cobb County encourages recipients to seek alternative sources of funding where available to address this problem. Cobb County must use more funding than usual under the HOME Program for its Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program to maintain its program capacity in PY 2007. As part of the 2007 Action Plan, Cobb County plans to fund the Atlanta Mutual Housing Association to enhance the competitiveness of the State Housing Tax Credit application for a much needed renovation financing for an 80-unit apartment project in the Fair Oaks Community [Harbor Oaks Apartments].
- ❑ As mixed use/mixed income communities continue to add amenities to new home construction and land and materials costs increase, home costs continue to rise in the Consortium and Cobb County. It is increasingly difficult to fund projects that support low and moderate area income families as a result. The Cobb County CDBG Office will continue to seek the means to help increase the availability of affordable housing in Cobb County.
- ❑ Due to population growth and the reduced amount of available, undeveloped land in the County, land prices have continued to rise resulting in a decrease in affordable funds to allow for extensive rehabilitation or reconstruction of existing homes owned by low and moderate income families. Cobb County and Marietta will also continue to fund acquisitions of infill and subdivision lots to subsidize the development of affordable housing.

There are a limited number of developers and builders who are willing to build affordable housing because contractors/developers are looking for large tract projects where profits can be achieved rather than small in-fill projects where profits are difficult to achieve. The profit potential for middle and upscale housing draws most builders to that range of development, leaving few who are willing to work in the affordable housing marketplace. Often, those builders willing to build or rehabilitate affordable housing have limited experience and skills – resulting in marginal quality of work and questionable bids. Cobb County will continue to seek partnerships with reputable for profit and not-for-profit organizations to address this issue.

4. Identify the federal, state, and local resources expected to be made available to address the needs identified in the plan. Federal resources should include Section 8 funds made available to the jurisdiction, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, and competitive McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act funds expected to be available to address priority needs and specific objectives identified in the strategic plan.



**Cobb County Response:**

The 2007 Action Plan for Cobb County and the GUCC is submitted using 80% of the PY 2006 final allocations received from HUD. The table below indicates the sources of anticipated funding to address the needs identified throughout this Plan.

<b>PY 2007 Funding</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Amount</b> [80% of 2006 Funding]
CDBG	Federal	\$ 3,221,763
HOME	Federal	\$ 1,573,998
ADDI	Federal	\$35,675
ESG	Federal	\$ 113,857
FEMA	State	\$ 257,768
CSBG	State	\$ 380,761
Section 8	Federal	\$13,333,000
LIHTC	Federal	\$ 54,040
LIHTC	State	\$ 54,040
Program Income	Local	\$ 300,000
Supportive Housing	Federal	\$1,500,000
Cobb County Housing Authority	Local	\$150,000
Department of Justice [DOJ]	Federal	\$50,000
Weed and Seed DOJ	Local	\$175,000
Cobb Housing, Inc.		<b>\$ 1,090,500</b>
ANDP		\$ 20,000
AmeriCorps		\$ 137,000
Cobb Collaborative		\$ 22,000
Cobb Literacy		\$ 7,000
CobbWorks		\$ 100,000
DCA [State]		\$ 5,500
Enterprise [Youth Build and Foundation]		\$ 100,000
Home Depot		\$ 75,000
HUD [Housing Counseling and Section 8]		\$ 65,000
HUD [Youth Build]		\$ 250,000
NeighborWorks America [Operating and Capital]		\$ 250,000
United Way [Housing Counseling and Youth Build]		\$ 59,000
<b>TOTAL Anticipated PY 2007 Funding</b>		<b>\$ 22,290,402</b>

**Managing the Process**

1. Identify the lead agency, entity, and agencies responsible for administering programs covered by the Consolidated Plan.

**Cobb County Response:**

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office serves as the lead agency for a collaborative effort among community stakeholders – neighborhoods, cities, county agencies, non-profits, elected officials, interest groups, and concerned citizens.

The Cobb County CDBG Office administers the CDBG Program for Cobb County and the City of Marietta, the ESG Program for Cobb, and serves as the lead agency for the Consortium

members for the HOME/ADDI Programs. Each participating city selects eligible projects within their city limits for inclusion in the Consolidated Plan, and is responsible for carrying out its projects. The CDBG Program Office oversees all projects to ensure compliance with HUD guidelines and regulations.

Cobb Housing, Inc., [CHI, the CHDO for the Consortium], carries out all HOME, CHDO/ Affordable Housing Development Programs in Cobb County, Cherokee County and the City of Marietta. CHI also operates the Consortium's Downpayment Assistance Programs and Housing Counseling Program for first-time homebuyers. CHI works closely with the Habitat for Humanity affiliate in Cherokee County by buying and donating properties to Habitat for its affordable housing projects. In accordance with regulations of the HOME Program, Section 92.351, and in furtherance of Cobb County's commitment to non-discrimination and equal opportunity in housing, Cobb County has adopted affirmative marketing procedures and requirements for HOME-assisted housing containing five (5) or more housing units. Such affirmative marketing procedures are following by Cobb Housing, Inc. and are documented and maintained by all necessary parties including Cobb County, each Subrecipient/CHDO, and all participating property owners. (See Attachment for full document outlining Cobb County's Affirmative Marketing Procedures).

Habitat for Humanity-Cobb builds about 25 affordable homes in Cobb each year, and operates a Downpayment Assistance Program [HOME-assisted]. Habitat historically has received HOME funding to buy and develop its properties. Based upon extra funding in PY 2006, Habitat for Humanity will receive less PY 2007 funding.

Cobb County Property Management Department Staff is involved in operating the ADA program and overseeing design and construction of CDBG-supported County ADA projects. The County's Budget and Internal Audit Department audits the CDBG Program Office.

2. Identify the significant aspects of the process by which the plan was developed, and the agencies, groups, organizations, and others who participated in the process.

**Cobb County Response:**

Prior to drafting the 2006-2010 Consolidated Plan, the CDBG Program Office held nine public hearings throughout the County and surveyed more than 50 member agencies of the Cobb Community Collaborative to solicit community input and ideas concerning Affordable Housing needs, non-Housing needs [public facilities and services], and needed services for persons that are homeless. Information gathered from citizens, Consortium members, program directors, and housing providers once again support prior conclusions that the Priority Needs for housing repair and Affordable Housing are still applicable, and should continue to be addressed in the upcoming planning period. Existing programs and services for PY 2007 continue to address the previously identified priority service needs [SafePath, Housemate Match, Cobb Microenterprise, transportation].

3. Describe actions that will take place during the next year to enhance coordination between public and private housing, health, and social service agencies.

**Cobb County Response:**

Cobb County works with a broad cross section of public, private and faith-based community organizations to identify residents' needs and to coordinate appropriate services and programs to meet those needs. Cobb County CDBG Program staff work very closely with these organizations on both an individual and group basis.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office continues to provide guidance and technical assistance to The Center for Family Resources [the Lead Agency for the HUD SuperNOFA Continuum of Care] and receives input from the Cobb Collaborative/Policy Council on Homelessness. This cooperative effort provides a special focus through a diverse group of community organizations, homeless shelters, permanent affordable housing developers, supportive service providers, and target population groups to examine needs, re-establish priorities, and plan strategies. Through this collaborative process, housing and service providers were able to contribute ideas and strategies to the development of this Plan.

Cobb County, through the Cobb County Board of Health, serves on the City of Atlanta HIV Planning Council. This entity serves as the vehicle for strategic planning and coordinating for the Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) Program. The Cobb County Health Department coordinates with the City of Atlanta to develop a metropolitan-wide strategy in the preparation and implementation of the HOPWA Program. Low to moderate income clients receive referrals from County Health Clinics to Good Samaritan and to Sweetwater Valley Camp.

To work with broad groups of organizations, the CDBG Program Office leverages the efforts of the Cobb Community Collaborative, a community organization focused on providing collaboration to improve the lives of all residents in Cobb County, Georgia. The CDBG Program Office played an important role in helping to establish the Collaborative in 2000. The Cobb Collaborative addresses a broad range of needs, including housing, public safety, children's issues, neighborhood development, and allocation of resources and has created a number of Policy Councils that allow organizations to focus their efforts on important needs within the County. Policy Councils have been established in the following areas: children and families, public safety, workforce development, literacy and homelessness. All of these areas are critical to the Consolidated Plan.

The CDBG Program Office also worked with the Cobb Human Services Coalition, recently merged with the Collaborative to become the Policy Council on Homelessness. This group is comprised of member agencies that provide services to the homeless and very low-income persons. The Policy Council has conducted surveys of the homeless and at-risk populations to determine needs in Cobb County, and to plan appropriate programs and services in response to these needs.

The CDBG Program Office has also worked with Cobb Housing, Inc. [CHI] a Community Housing Development Organization [CHDO] non-profit housing development organization committed to increasing access to safe, decent and affordable housing in Cobb and Cherokee Counties. Under CHI, the HOMEstart Program offers homeownership counseling and education. Downpayment Assistance is available to qualified first-time homebuyers. CHI is also developing affordable new and rehabilitated single-family homes. As a United Way Community Partner, CHI is working with the Individual Development Accounts Program, a "savings tool" for homeownership. CHI also works with the Marietta Housing Authority and the City of Marietta Section 8 program, as well as their housing choice voucher homeownership programs. The CDBG Program Office staff serves in an advisory role for CHI.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office has coordinated housing and homeless services with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). DCA operates a host of state and federal grant programs; serves as the state's lead agency in housing finance and development; promulgates building codes to be adopted by local governments; provides comprehensive planning, technical and research assistance to local governments; and serves as the lead agency for the state's solid waste reduction efforts. CDBG staff serves on DCA's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) statewide coordinating

committee, helping to assure a linkage with homeless programs throughout Georgia. This participation helps agencies in Cobb serving the homeless to access information from other providers in Georgia.

Cobb CDBG works with the Franklin Road Improvement Program. The Program, coordinated by the City of Marietta, addresses the need of low to moderate income clients in the Franklin Road area through crime reduction and redevelopment activities, and secures and coordinates the recently awarded U.S. Department of Justice Weed and Seed funding to expand the program.

CDBG staff also serve on the Georgia Coalition to End Homelessness (GCEH), a statewide collaboration of organizations providing shelter, housing, and services for homeless families and individuals. GCEH assists communities and providers with information, upgrading standards, and coordination.

Since these programs and services continue to make a positive difference for low and moderate income residents of Cobb County and the Consortium, Cobb County has decided to continue the support of the services and programs that are currently in place. However, there are still gaps, or unmet needs, and additional resources are needed to keep existing programs in place.

## **Citizen Participation**

1. Provide a summary of the citizen participation process.

### **Cobb County Response:**

Cobb County and the Consortium established a Citizen Participation Plan in 1995, which was revised in 2002 to include updated information. However, no substantive changes were needed, nor were any substantive changes made to the Citizen Participation Plan. The PY 2007 Action Plan was developed in accordance with the guidelines established in the Citizen Participation Plan.

The Consolidated Plan prepared by the Cobb County CDBG Program Office in FY 2005 presents a collaborative effort from stakeholders in Cobb County and the Consortium's communities. Public Hearings were held on February 27, 2006, March 16, 2006 and October 26, 2006, and November 7, 2006 [Cherokee County] to solicit Needs information, and to review applications received for PY 2007 funding. In addition, each of the five participating cities held a public hearing to solicit input from the residents of their communities. Collaboration with housing agencies, citizens, consortium members and service providers indicate that housing issues continue to demand the attention of HOME Program, Emergency Shelter, and Community Development Block Grant funds, as well as of other sources of federal assistance.

2. Provide a summary of citizen comments or views on the plan.

### **Cobb County Response:**

Each legal notice requested public comment. Request for comments was made at each of the public hearing. No comments were received regarding the FY 2007 Action Plan.

3. Provide a summary of efforts made to broaden public participation in the development of the consolidated plan, including outreach to minorities and non-English speaking persons, as well as persons with disabilities.

**Cobb County Response:**

Participation by the residents of Cobb County continues to be a challenge. During the PY 2007 Action Plan preparation, Cobb County published both legal and display ads as an attempt to reach more residents. A Hispanic interpreter is available upon request at all Cobb County public hearings.

The minority population in Cobb County is concentrated in the southwest corridor of the county and in the cities. The Cobb County Commissioner serving the southwest corridor has hosted town hall meetings and forums. The Councilman serving the large minority section of the City of Marietta continues to provide these residents with program information. Feedback from these meetings were used in the development of the PY 2007 Action Plan.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office has compiled a list of more than 125 names and e-mail addresses for non-profit organizations and any resident who calls the office for information. Prior to each public hearing, an e-mail is sent to the names on this list.

During PY 2006, the Cobb County CDBG webpage was expanded to include more information on the CDBG, HOME and ESG Programs. For PY 2007, this website will be enhanced to provide access to many of the reports available and key planning dates.

4. Provide a written explanation of comments not accepted and the reasons why these comments were not accepted.

**Cobb County Response:**

Comments from the public were received and incorporated into the PY 2007 Action Plan.

## **Institutional Structure**

1. Describe actions that will take place during the next year to develop institutional structure.

**Cobb County Response:**

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office serves as the lead agency for planning and coordinating the implementation of the Action Plan. As part of the planning process, Cobb meets with representatives of each Member County and Participating City to discuss housing and non-housing needs and resources, and to prioritize strategies to meet those needs. The Cobb CDBG Program Office is the agency through which the HOME program is administered for the Consortium, and it administers the CDBG and ESG Programs in Cobb, as well as the CSBG, FEMA and DOJ Programs.

Funds are processed through Cobb's Finance Department to reimburse public agencies, private businesses, CHDOs, and other non-profit agencies who act as Subrecipients for Cobb's federally-funded programs. Rehabilitation projects addressed under the Housing Rehabilitation Program are carried out under the supervision of the Cobb CDBG Housing Rehab staff that design work specifications and inspect work for satisfactory completion.

There are several broad-based organizations in Cobb County that include representatives from most social service agencies in the county:

- ❑ The Cobb Collaborative is a director-level agency representing social service agencies, county departments [CDBG Office, Economic Development Department], public safety, and local schools and colleges. The Collaborative provides a forum for coordinated planning and the recommendation of funding priorities. Collaborative members are all urged to participate in the Pathways HMIS information system.
- ❑ The Cobb Human Services Coalition, formed in 1982 and incorporated in 1989, recently became the Policy Council on Homelessness under the Cobb Collaborative. This Council concentrates on the needs of the homeless population, and carries out the Point-In-Time Homeless Count, as well as work with Cobb CDBG staff on the County's Continuum of Care.
- ❑ Cobb United Way's Strategic Planning Committee includes representatives from businesses and large employers throughout the County in addition to social services agencies. The current focus of United Way in Cobb is to support critical local issues, including school readiness and homelessness.
- ❑ The Cobb Literacy Council includes members representing a broad cross section of human service agencies in Cobb County, particularly those agencies assisting families and individuals with the development of self-sufficiency skills and improved job capacity. Both GED and ESL literacy classes are taught in conjunction with many organizations' assistance programs, and at multiple locations, such as homeless shelters and transitional housing.
- ❑ CobbWorks is the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program that assists residents and businesses in Cobb with job development, training, referrals, and collaboration among agencies. Its board of directors is comprised of representatives of many businesses, service organizations, and government representatives to include the Director of the CDBG office.
- ❑ CHDO – Cobb Housing, Inc. serves as the CHDO for the Consortium [Board advisors include Director of CDBG office and Manager of Marietta's Community Development Division].
- ❑ The Tommy Nobis Center, the Community Services Board, and Cobb Arc provide developmental services for mentally and physically disabled residents.
- ❑ The Georgia Urban County Consortium is a two-county Consortium. This unique structure provides for reduced administrative costs and joint planning. However, although administratively linked, each Member and each participating City makes its own funding decisions. The Cobb Collaborative brings more than 100 community agencies and organizations together to coordinate planning and information sharing. In addition, the computerized client network established by the Coalition has provided a more effective means of coordinating client information and referrals among social service agencies in the County. This network has been strengthened in the past year by merging the Coalition's network with the Pathways System, a state-wide network selected by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to serve throughout Georgia.
- ❑ There are four housing authorities in Cobb County – the Cobb County Housing Authority, the Smyrna Housing Authority, the Marietta Housing Authority, and the Acworth Housing Authority. The Cobb County Housing Authority and the Smyrna Housing Authority do not operate public housing, but serve as a bonding authority for housing programs. The Marietta Housing Authority owns and operates public housing in Marietta, and manages a Section 8 Program that serves all of Cobb County. In addition, the City of Marietta operates a Section 8 Program for residents within the city. The Acworth Housing Authority owns and operates a small number of public housing units. There is also a housing authority in Cherokee County.

Cobb County has no legal authority over the operations or management of the two municipal housing authorities in the county. The Mayor of Acworth appoints the Housing

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Authority's Commissioners. The Commissioners hire the Director, and the Director hires other staff. Review of proposed development sites, comprehensive plans, and/or proposed changes is done by the Commissioners. Acworth receives no additional funding from the County. The Cobb Housing Authority generates Housing Mortgage Bond Issues to facilitate the purchase of affordable housing by first-time homebuyers. It also provides grant funding to support housing and social services needs in Cobb County.

Marietta's Mayor and Council appoint the Board of Directors for the Marietta Housing Authority. The City of Marietta and Cobb County review proposed development sites, comprehensive plans, and/or proposed changes.

## **Monitoring**

1. Describe actions that will take place during the next year to monitor its housing and community development projects and ensure long-term compliance with program requirements and comprehensive planning requirements.

### **Cobb County Response:**

To insure that each recipient of HOME, CDBG, ESG, and other federal funds operates in compliance with applicable federal laws and regulations, Cobb CDBG implements a monitoring strategy that closely reviews Subrecipient activities and provides extensive technical assistance to prevent compliance problems.

**CDBG/HOME:** The CDBG Program Office's Community Program Service (CPS) staff implements a risk analysis matrix for monitoring all appropriate CDBG/HOME subrecipients for each Program Year (PY). This risk analysis closely mirrors the Community Planning Development (CPD) Notice 04-01, issued February 2, 2004 and CPD Notice 02-11, which delineates the relevant factors to monitor for determining the risk level for grantees, or in the case of Cobb County, subrecipients. Once projects have been approved and subrecipients have been issued subrecipient agreements, the CPS staff conducts a four page risk analysis worksheet that looks at Financial Capacity; Management; Planning and National Objectives. Each subrecipient is graded and its score is listed in one (1) of three categories: low risk: 0-30 points; moderate risk: 31-50 points; and high risk: 51-100 points. Based on the scoring for each subrecipient, the Cobb County CDBG Program Office determines its annual monitoring schedule based on the number of moderate and high risk subrecipients.

As a general rule, the CPS staff will monitor on-site all moderate and high risk subrecipients on an annual basis, typically in July or August of the Program Year. Conversely, the low-risk subrecipients are monitored on-site every other program year during the same time frame, and desk reviews are conducted throughout the year. CPS staff monitors performance expectations of subrecipients (timeliness and productivity) in line with new performance objectives of HUD.

The above described "actions" are a consistent element of the Cobb County CDBG Program Office in our efforts to effectively manage the monitoring process for both the CDBG and HOME Programs.



- ❑ **ESG** – Emergency Shelter Grant funding is monitored through both desk reviews of paperwork submitted with monthly reimbursement requests, and through site visits to shelters. The monitoring visit reviews such areas as shelter expenses, drug-free facilities, financial and statistical record systems, and program rules. Each site visit often includes an interview of a shelter guest concerning the shelter rules, and their feeling of safety within the shelter.

## **Lead-based Paint**

1. Describe the actions that will take place during the next year to evaluate and reduce the number of housing units containing lead-based paint hazards in order to increase the inventory of lead-safe housing available to extremely low-income, low-income, and moderate-income families, and how the plan for the reduction of lead-based hazards is related to the extent of lead poisoning and hazards.

### **Cobb County Response:**

Measures to reduce lead-based paint hazards include:

- ❑ Abating or removing the lead-based paint hazards in existing housing, focusing on the housing most at risk
- ❑ Education of the public regarding the hazards of lead-based paint and precautions that can be taken by parents to protect their children
- ❑ Developing new affordable housing to provide healthy alternatives for families
- ❑ Testing of children for blood lead levels

In response to the hazard, and given the limited resources available, the GUCC has planned a steady, long-term response to reducing Lead Based Paint hazards, in accordance with Federal lead-based paint standards, other applicable federal regulations, and local property standards:

- ❑ Identify houses with lead-based paint through the GUCC's housing programs, and abate or remove the lead hazards in high priority units. Government assisted housing rehabilitation projects will include an inspection using the Niton equipment and risk assessment (when required) of Lead-Based Paint hazards according to HUD and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidelines. Policies and procedures for abatement of lead hazards have been established for use in Cobb County. They include determining cost effectiveness in various situations, and procedures for assessing, contracting and inspecting abatement work.
- ❑ Prepare work write-ups and costs estimates for the homes of all income eligible residents in Cobb County with identified lead-based paint hazards.
- ❑ Using comprehensive education packets prepared for distribution to homeowners, inform homeowners about safety measures they can take to protect themselves and their families.
- ❑ Work with affordable housing developers and builders to develop new affordable housing free of any lead-based paint hazards.
- ❑ Continue to work with the Health Department, which monitors the occurrence of elevated blood lead levels in children, to obtain referrals in such cases. Inspect for lead-based paint in all houses of children identified with an elevated blood lead level, and take immediate action to correct the sources or remove the family to safe housing.

Since 1999, the Cobb County CDBG office has removed or abated the lead hazard in more than 131 homes.

## HOUSING

### Specific Housing Objectives

\*Please also refer to the Housing Needs Table in the Needs.xls workbook.

1. Describe the priorities and specific objectives the jurisdiction hopes to achieve during the next year.

#### **Cobb County Response:**

The PY 2007 priorities have not changed from the 2006-2010 Consolidated Plan.

#### **Increase Access to Affordable Housing for Low and Moderate Income Persons**

As land cost in Cobb County continue to rise, the affordable housing market continues to decrease. The low to moderate income residents of Cobb County find it increasingly difficult to fulfill the American dream of homeownership. Cobb County and the GUCC, will continue providing CHDO funding to Cobb Housing, Inc. [CHI] to acquire five (5) additional properties for development as affordable housing.

Cobb County and the GUCC continue to set aside HOME and American Dream Downpayment Initiative [ADDI] funding for Downpayment assistance to first time homebuyers. Cobb Habitat for Humanity and Cobb Housing, Inc. will continue to operate these programs for Cobb County, providing assistance to 29 new homeowners during 2007.

#### **Eliminate Substandard Housing for Low and Moderate Income Individuals and Families**

The low and moderate income homeowners which includes senior citizens on fixed income, working families, single parent households and persons with disabilities, are generally found in older homes in need of major repairs to bring their homes up to code. The cost of these repairs continue to rise making it increasingly difficult for low to moderate income persons to be able to maintain their homes. Cobb County and the GUCC plan to use CDBG, HOME and Program Income funds to rehabilitate 26 homes and reconstruct 9 homes through zero interest deferred payment loans. In addition, 37 homeowners will receive emergency assistance grants for repairs that are of a health or safety nature.

#### **Increase Housing Options for Homeless and Near-Homeless Individuals and Families**

Cobb County and the GUCC support non-profit, private and public entities that provide housing opportunities for at-risk populations using CDBG, HOME and ESG funding. In addition, the County assists local organizations in providing emergency shelter [CDBG, ESG], transitional housing [HOME, CDBG, ESG], and services to guide individuals through the transition period of moving into permanent housing and independent living [HOME, CDBG]. The County continues to offer assistance to organizations that perform outreach to identify and assess the needs of homeless persons [ESG] and also to those organizations committed to assisting individuals and families to avoid becoming homeless [HOME, CDBG, ESG]. For example, Cobb County plans to use ESG funding to provide transitional housing as a part of a Prison Discharge Program to prevent newly-released inmates from becoming homeless through mentoring, housing, rehabilitation referrals, and employment referrals.

The following summarizes Cobb County/GUCC Affordable Housing and Housing Rehabilitation/Reconstruction goals for PY 2007.

New affordable housing units developed:	5
First-time homebuyers assisted:	29
Existing owner homes rehabilitated:	26
Existing owner homes reconstructed:	9
Existing owner homes assisted with emergency repairs:	37

2. Describe how Federal, State, and local public and private sector resources that are reasonably expected to be available will be used to address identified housing needs for the period covered by this Action Plan.

**Cobb County Response:**

❑ <b>Cobb County</b>	
➤ CDBG funds:	\$ 160,094
➤ HOME/ADDI funds:	831,283
❑ <b>City of Marietta</b>	
➤ CDBG funds:	319,046
➤ HOME/ADDI funds:	288,451
❑ <b>Cherokee County</b>	
➤ HOME/ADDI funds:	153,839
Total	\$ 1,752,713

**Needs of Public Housing**

1. Describe the manner in which the plan of the jurisdiction will help address the needs of public housing and activities it will undertake during the next year to encourage public housing residents to become more involved in management and participate in homeownership.

**Cobb County Response:**

The Marietta Housing Authority has very active resident associations, the officers of which have been the beneficiaries of extensive training in administration and fund management. For example, the associations are involved in the management of community center activities. The associations have been allocated \$15,000 for their own budgeting and expenditure, subject to minimal controls by the Authority to assure compliance with HUD requirements. An amount of \$100,000 has been budgeted annually by the Authority for resident support.

2. If the public housing agency is designated as "troubled" by HUD or otherwise is performing poorly, the jurisdiction shall describe the manner in which it will provide financial or other assistance in improving its operations to remove such designation during the next year.

N/A

## Barriers to Affordable Housing

1. Describe the actions that will take place during the next year to remove barriers to affordable housing.

### **Cobb County Response:**

Cobb County's housing market presents significant impediments to developing an adequate supply of affordable housing for low to moderate-income people. Cobb County's economic growth, coupled with its perception by the people in the Atlanta MSA, being an "affluent" community, has created the barrier between developers and builders to focus their attention and efforts on more expensive, exclusive, and elaborate housing. This tendency is exacerbated by the high cost of land, which yields smaller profits and smaller returns on smaller homes. As a result, fewer affordable housing units are generally built than are needed by residents.

Cobb's Analysis of Impediments [AI] to Fair Housing Choice in Cobb County examined a number of areas in which barriers to the development of affordable housing might exist. The areas examined included:

- ☐ Limited Supply of Affordable Housing
- ☐ Banking, Insurance, Brokerage Policies and Practices that limit Fair Housing choice
- ☐ Discriminatory Tenant Selection in Rental Housing
- ☐ Zoning Laws, Building Codes, Fees and Taxes, which limit Affordable Housing Choice
- ☐ Limited Number of Private (Rental and Homeowner) Units which are Accessible to Disabled Persons
- ☐ Neighborhoods with Limited Access to Transportation
- ☐ Concentration of Affordable Housing and Minorities in older Neighborhoods
- ☐ Policies and Procedures of Government Housing Programs

The AI identified the following as significant barriers:

- ☐ The high cost of land, resulting in a concentration on expensive homes by developers and builders
- ☐ A shortage of builders who work regularly in the affordable housing arena
- ☐ Zoning laws and building codes that restrict affordable housing options
- ☐ A significant decline in the condition of much older housing, generally the most affordable housing in the community
- ☐ Difficulties by low and moderate-income residents in obtaining adequate financing, generally due to poor credit and insufficient income to meet minimum qualifications
- ☐ Limited understanding of financing and ownership requirements by low and moderate-income residents
- ☐ A resistance by affluent homeowners to accept affordable housing developments in areas adjacent or near their subdivisions

The Annual Action Steps, which have become part of the annual CAPER submission to HUD describe the activities that the Cobb County CDBG program has carried out to overcome Impediments to Fair Housing.

A number of the actions that have been taken over the past ten years to reduce some of these problems include:

- ☐ Zoning changes instituted by Cobb County that lowered the minimum square footage for new development
  - ☐ Increased support for non-profit developers, which has resulted in construction of affordable housing
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- ❑ Development of first-time homebuyer down-payment programs, and
- ❑ Implementation of homebuyer education programs that better prepare interested residents for homeownership
- ❑ An extensive effort to rehabilitate older, deteriorating housing, thus reducing the loss of such affordable housing stock
- ❑ CHI hosted a luncheon for real estate agents and lenders to present its programs designed to help first-time home-buyers
- ❑ CHI, through its partnership with the Latin American Association, Consumer Credit Counseling Service and New Georgia Mortgage Service, also provides a variety of free-bilingual services to Spanish-speaking home buyers

However, the high costs of land and a tendency to focus on upscale development still persist, making the development of affordable housing a continuing challenge. Cobb County will continue to carryout the above strategies to reduce barriers to affordable housing.

### **HOME/ American Dream Down payment Initiative (ADDI)**

1. Describe other forms of investment not described in § 92.205(b).
2. If the participating jurisdiction (PJ) will use HOME or ADDI funds for homebuyers, it must state the guidelines for resale or recapture, as required in § 92.254 of the HOME rule.

#### **Cobb County Response:**

All downpayment assistance loans involve a lien on the property receiving assistance. Downpayment assistance is provided to income-eligible purchasers in the Georgia Urban County Consortium [GUCC] via a “soft-second” mortgage, with a lien on the property. A mortgage lender makes the first mortgage loan. When the homes are sold, the downpayment assistance loans are repaid, and the program income derived is used by the GUCC for other eligible activities.

Cobb County uses the recapture method for HOME/ADDI programs to comply with 24 CFR 92.254(a)(4). The method is outlined under Item 3 of the Cobb County HOME Program Agreement for FY 2007 and states:

#### **Recapture Provisions [24 CFR 92.254(5)]**

The Recapture Provisions will ensure compliance with the “Period of Affordability” requirements in 24 CFR 92.254(a)(4).

#### **Recapture Provisions [24 CFR 92.254(5)(ii)]**

If the subrecipient, or its related homeowners, chooses to sell or use the property for non-eligible HOME Program activities, the full amount of the HOME Program funding assistance for this activity shall be recaptured and repaid to the GUCC.

Eligible homebuyers who received Downpayment Assistance and other HOME Program funds, from the subrecipient must return the HOME funds to the GUCC, which will ensure that the recaptured HOME Program Funds are reinvested in other affordable housing for low to moderate income persons. The HOME Program Affordability Period for activities shall be accomplished through deed restrictions, property liens, and contractual obligations, as described in Article I, Items 2-4 of the HOME Program Subrecipient Agreement.

3. If the PJ will use HOME funds to refinance existing debt secured by multifamily housing that is being rehabilitated with HOME funds, it must state its refinancing guidelines required under § 92.206(b). The guidelines shall describe the conditions under which the PJ will refinance existing debt. At a minimum these guidelines must:
  - a. Demonstrate that rehabilitation is the primary eligible activity and ensure that this requirement is met by establishing a minimum level of rehabilitation per unit or a required ratio between rehabilitation and refinancing.
  - b. Require a review of management practices to demonstrate that disinvestments in the property has not occurred; that the long-term needs of the project can be met; and that the feasibility of serving the targeted population over an extended affordability period can be demonstrated.
  - c. State whether the new investment is being made to maintain current affordable units, create additional affordable units, or both.
  - d. Specify the required period of affordability, whether it is the minimum 15 years or longer.
  - e. Specify whether the investment of HOME funds may be jurisdiction-wide or limited to a specific geographic area, such as a neighborhood identified in a neighborhood revitalization strategy under 24 CFR 91.215(e)(2) or a Federally designated Empowerment Zone or Enterprise Community.
  - f. State that HOME funds cannot be used to refinance multifamily loans made or insured by any federal program, including CDBG.

**Cobb County Response:**

Cobb County has not used HOME funds to refinance existing debt secured by multifamily housing.

4. If the PJ is going to receive American Dream Down payment Initiative (ADDI) funds, please complete the following narratives:
  - a. Describe the planned use of the ADDI funds.

**Cobb County Response:**

Cobb County intends to allocate 50% of its FY2007 ADDI funds to Cobb Habitat for Humanity and 50% to Cobb Housing, Inc. Both of these agencies administer homeownership programs under Cobb's HOME Program. Cobb County and the GUCC expect to spend \$ 35,675 providing seven (7) qualified First-Time Homebuyers with downpayment assistance. The number of assisted homeowners is projected using reduced funding for the ADDI Program in PY 2006.

- b. Describe the PJ's plan for conducting targeted outreach to residents and tenants of public housing and manufactured housing and to other families assisted by public housing agencies, for the purposes of ensuring that the ADDI funds are used to provide down payment assistance for such residents, tenants, and families.

**Cobb County Response:**

Cobb County intends to target residents and tenants of public and manufactured housing and to other facilities assisted by public housing agencies, including the Section 8 Program and Project Self-Sufficiency tenants, using the following types of outreach methods.

- The Marietta Housing Authority will be requested to notify its Public Housing, Section 8, and Project Self-Sufficiency tenants about the ADDI Homeownership Program.
  - The City of Marietta will be requested to notify its Section 8 and Project Self-Sufficiency tenants about the ADDI Homeownership Program.
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- The City of Acworth Housing Authority will be requested to notify its Public Housing tenants about the Cobb ADDI Homeownership Program.
  - Both CHI and HFH will be requested to coordinate with the MHA, the City of Marietta, and the Acworth Housing Authority to obtain and review Applications received from Public Housing, Section 8, and Self-Sufficiency tenants interested in applying for Cobb ADDI assistance.
  - CHI and HFH will be requested to prepare and carry out a plan for contacting mobile home and manufactured housing residents throughout Cobb County in order to inform such residents about Cobb's ADDI Program.
  - CHI and HFH will be requested to work with all Cobb public housing agencies [Cobb Housing Authority and related agencies} to identify potential low-income residents who might qualify for ADDI homeownership assistance.
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- c. Describe the actions to be taken to ensure the suitability of families receiving ADDI funds to undertake and maintain homeownership, such as provision of housing counseling to homebuyers.

**Cobb County Response:**

Cobb County intends to carry out the following types of activities to ensure the suitability of low income families to undertake and maintain homeownership.

- The Underwriting Criteria of each participating lending institution must be met and adhered to. Only those families who can meet First Mortgage Underwriting Criteria will be able to undertake and maintain homeownership.
- Both CHI and HFH will provide Pre-Purchase Homeownership Counseling to all families who can meet a lender's Underwriting Practices.
- CHI and HFH will provide Post-Purchase Counseling to all low-income families who qualify for ADDI assistance to assist them in their efforts to maintain their homeownership.
- CHI and HFH will work and coordinate closely with the first mortgage lenders of ADDI-assisted families to identify any potential or actual mortgage payment delinquencies so that intensive counseling can be rendered in an effort to prevent homeownership foreclosures, whenever possible.
- CHI and HFH will plan and implement other local programs which will assist potential target tenants and residents to become eligible ADDI homeowners and to maintain their homeownership.



## HOMELESS

### Specific Homeless Prevention Elements

\*Please also refer to the Homeless Needs Table in the Needs.xls workbook.

1. Sources of Funds—Identify the private and public resources that the jurisdiction expects to receive during the next year to address homeless needs and to prevent homelessness. These include the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act programs, other special federal, state and local and private funds targeted to homeless individuals and families with children, especially the chronically homeless, the HUD formula programs, and any publicly-owned land or property. Please describe, briefly, the jurisdiction's plan for the investment and use of funds directed toward homelessness.

HUD SuperNOFA—Supportive Housing Program, Shelter Plus Care; nonprofit organizations; faith-based programs; GA Department of Community Affairs. Generally, Cobb organizations receive about \$ 1.2 million annually through the HUD SuperNOFA. Approximately two to three times that much is provided by nonprofit organizations and faith-based groups. Probably an additional \$1 million in donated time is provided by volunteers who assist the shelters and related programs, such as those run by MUST Ministries and The Extension, Inc. About \$300,000 in CSBG funds are received by local organizations that serve the homeless. Most is used for case management, facility operating costs, and services. In addition, organizations provide rent, utilities and food for Cobb residents—of which an estimated 50 % is used to serve the homeless and much of the remainder to prevent homelessness. Finally, Cobb County expects significant resources through the Disabled Veterans of America and their partners, which is newly operating in the county (no dollar amount known yet).

2. Homelessness—In a narrative, describe how the action plan will address the specific objectives of the Strategic Plan and, ultimately, the priority needs identified. Please also identify potential obstacles to completing these action steps.

#### **Cobb County Response:**

Increasing the amount of permanent housing with supportive services has been identified as a top priority for the Cobb Continuum. The majority of chronically homeless in Cobb have severe mental illness and/or substance abuse issues. They require long-term, affordable housing options with supportive services in order to make the transition to residential stability. In addition to permanent affordable housing, Cobb County's strategy for ending chronic homelessness addresses each of the issues that most often cause this problem:

- the high prevalence of substance abuse among some homeless individuals
- inadequate education and/or job skills among many homeless persons
- a lack of housing opportunities for individuals with Severe Mental Illness and/or physical disabilities
- the shortage of affordable housing in general in Cobb County

Cobb has been successful in getting at least one new program funded for the past several year that provides permanent housing for homeless persons with disabilities.

Shelter and transitional housing programs play an important role in our Continuum in transitioning the homeless into residential stability. These programs stabilize the homeless and provide opportunity to treat the disabling condition(s). Once these issues have been treated, education, employment, life skills, etc. can be addressed. Additional resources are

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needed to increase the capacity of shelters providing services for individuals with substance abuse and mental health issues.

Inadequate education and/or job skills among many homeless persons have been addressed in several initiatives. The Cobb Literacy Council has added new GED, ESL and literacy programs. Several classes are being taught at homeless shelters, the Cobb Detention Center, and at churches with outreach and/or feeding programs serving the chronically homeless. The CLC sponsored a successful literacy conference and provided technical assistance to nonprofit organizations and faith based groups to start new literacy programs. Career counseling and job readiness counseling programs have been strengthened throughout the Continuum. Members of the CHSC Homeless Policy Council serve on the Cobb Collaborative's Education Committee to coordinate the special needs of the homeless.

The shortage of affordable housing in Cobb County continues to be a major issue. However, due to the high cost of living in the metro area, persons receiving mainstream benefits such as SSI, Social Security, or VA pension cannot afford "affordable" units currently in planning by the city's redevelopment board. Section 8 programs in the city and county are full and have extremely long waiting lists. Organizations seeking to develop group homes or other supportive housing projects have been severely hampered by public opposition to having them located in their neighborhoods.

CDBG and HOME Program funds were used to assist Cobb Housing, Inc., a nonprofit CHDO, in its efforts to create more housing, and HOME funds were used by The Center for Family Resources to renovate their affordable housing project. Habitat for Humanity continues to build approximately 25 new affordable homes per year. The Cobb Community Services Board and MUST Ministries received funding to develop 7 new units of permanent housing with supportive services.

The following is our vision of a system designed to meet the needs of Cobb's homeless and at-risk population. The essential components and characteristics of this system are as follows:

- ❑ An **Outreach & Intake system** that identifies homeless and at-risk families and individuals, and which assesses their circumstances and needs. The intake process must efficiently and effectively determine the immediate needs of the homeless, as well as the causes of their homelessness. Also, to eliminate unnecessary referrals, the system should identify the actions that have already been undertaken by the homeless clients themselves, and by other local service providers or outside communities. In addition, it is important that at-risk persons be identified so that **preventive measures** can be implemented to reduce the number of persons who become homeless.
- ❑ A **Referral and Case Management System** with a method and tools to direct the homeless to appropriate housing and services. Some families or individuals may require only limited assistance for a short period of time, such as emergency food and shelter -- until a first paycheck is received or a medical emergency is past. Others, however, will require more comprehensive and long-term assistance, such as transitional housing with supportive services and job training. Because resources are limited, it is important for the system to eliminate duplication of effort by local agencies, both in intake and assessment procedures, and in subsequent housing and supportive services. These principles suggest the need for common intake forms, shared data, effective assessment instruments and procedures, and on-going

coordination of assistance among community organizations, which have been addressed with an improved HMIS.

- ❑ A range of **Emergency Shelter facilities and short-term services** (food, clothing, temporary financial assistance, transportation assistance) to meet a variety of family or individual circumstances. These facilities and services should be able to meet the needs of families with children, individuals, persons with special health problems, and other characteristics.
- ❑ **Transitional Housing with supportive services** for families and individuals who require longer periods of time to resolve problems and make the transition to self-sufficiency. As with emergency shelters, there should be a variety of facilities to accommodate various family and individual circumstances.
- ❑ **Permanent Affordable Housing** that is suited for the range of incomes and the mental and physical needs of the various population groups who live in the County. This must include Permanent Housing for persons with disabilities

Cobb County has established a coordinated planning process for addressing the needs of the homeless, having developed its first continuum of care in 1989 when the Cobb Human Services Coalition [CHSC] conducted the first county-wide service planning for the homeless and those at-risk. For over sixteen years, CHSC has brought organizations together to share information, coordinate services, and develop new housing and resources to meet the needs of the homeless in Cobb County. With a membership representing a broad range of human service organizations, including providers of housing and services for the homeless and at-risk populations, the CHSC is well positioned to lead such a collaborative process.

In 2005, the CHSC entered into a formal partnership with the broader-focused Cobb Community Collaborative to become the Policy Council on Homelessness. The Cobb Community Collaborative is a community based organization focused on providing an arena for collaboration to improve the lives of all residents in Cobb County, Georgia. The mission is accomplished through coordinating human services efforts, and through this coordination, member organizations identify issues of concerns to the community, examine those issues, and facilitate joint action to instigate needed change to benefit the citizens of Cobb County. As the Council on Homelessness, the CHSC maintains its mission of developing and coordinating strategies to address the issue of homelessness in Cobb County.

The Policy Council has involved a broad base of community organizations over the full course of the past year in examining local data, and planning housing and services for the homeless and those at-risk within Cobb County. The Policy Council has devoted a part of each of its quarterly general meetings to Cobb's Continuum planning process. These meetings provided general awareness of CoC issues, and encouraged participation by a wide range of community groups.

Staff support for the Continuum planning process was provided by the Cobb CDBG Program Office, including assistance in conducting planning meetings, assimilating new data, and updating CoC strategies. CDBG staff attend all CHSC meetings and are active in the Cobb Collaborative. CDBG staff members have been involved in planning and service development to assist the homeless in Cobb County since the early 1980's, lending historical perspective and an understanding of the problems faced.

Homeless individuals and families participated in focus sessions at two local shelters, providing information based on their experiences and needs. Other participants from a wide variety of organizations have been involved in preparation of Cobb's Continuum of Care, including local government agencies, non-profit housing and service providers, foundation representatives, church sponsored groups, neighborhood associations, private sector businesses, local law enforcement, the Cobb Collaborative, and the Georgia Coalition To End Homelessness. These organizations assisted in a variety of ways, including:

- participating in planning meetings
- sharing data on particular homeless populations
- assisting with surveys
- reviewing and rating SHP applications
- reviewing drafts of the Continuum and helping to update sections on housing and services available
- helping to rate priorities for the Gaps Analysis Chart

Cobb's efforts to plan and coordinate services extend beyond the county to working with our neighboring counties and municipalities throughout the metropolitan Atlanta area. Cobb County is a member of the Regional Commission on Homelessness. The Commission has been working to develop a comprehensive plan for the metro Atlanta region, focusing on developing resources, collecting and analyzing data, coordinating community efforts, promoting standards, educating the public, and advocating for public policy changes. The Commission is committed to preventing the discharge of persons into homelessness from mainstream service delivery programs and develop permanent supportive housing for the chronically homeless. Representatives from across the metro area, including several from Cobb County, participate on various councils and committees as the regional planning process moves forward.

3. Chronic homelessness—The jurisdiction must describe the specific planned action steps it will take over the next year aimed at eliminating chronic homelessness by 2012. Again, please identify barriers to achieving this.

All of Cobb's shelters that serve the chronically homeless are high-demand shelters, with the exception of the Marietta-Cobb Winter Shelter. The Continuum of Care organizations have discussed the need for a low-demand shelter and outreach worker. However, these discussions are very preliminary and no organization has stepped up to lead the development of a project. Location for such a project would also be a difficult hurdle to overcome.

During the past year, Cobb undertook a number of initiatives to implement the goals for ending chronic homelessness:

- ❑ Cobb successfully conducted a shelter count of the homeless in 2006, to determine if the population is increasing or decreasing. A survey was conducted of a cross section of homeless persons (adults) identified during the count to gain additional information about this population.
- ❑ The Policy Council has planned for a full street and shelter count in January 2007. This count will update the full count completed in January 2005.
- ❑ The number of programs providing ESL classes and structured employment readiness and job skills training was expanded. Literacy and GED programs at The Extension were strengthened and expanded. Cobb Works has applied for additional funding to support employment programs for persons being discharged from the justice system.
- ❑ Housing for disabled homeless veterans was planned in 2006, and will be expanded in 2007.

- ❑ A family reunification program was operated by Travelers Aid of Metropolitan Atlanta. This program provides funds to help reunify homeless persons with family who are willing to provide stable housing for at least two months.
- ❑ Outreach was provided to case managers throughout the Continuum to educate them on the importance of helping clients access mainstream benefits. Information was distributed on HUD's FirstStep tool assist them in evaluating their client's eligibility for benefits.
- ❑ Cobb continued to develop its relationship with the metro Atlanta Regional Commission on Homelessness (RCoH). Representatives from Cobb participated in several RCoH Councils and work groups. The United Way in Cobb and The Center for Family Resources co-sponsored a meeting of Cobb County stakeholders and representatives from the RCoH. The goal of the meeting was to engage local stakeholders on priority projects for ending chronic homelessness. Stakeholders worked to identify a manageable number of priorities that will enable the Member Jurisdictions to address the unique needs of their area. Priorities identified formed Blueprint priorities for the Cobb County Member Jurisdiction.
- ❑ Cobb's Discharge Planning Committee met monthly to develop protocols for persons being discharged from hospitals, mental health institutions, and correctional institutions. Procedures were developed to work with hospitals and local shelters to provide interim housing while longer-term plans are developed. Significant improvements have resulted and a model for wider application is being developed.
- ❑ Through the discharge planning conducted in 2005, a new facility was funded and opened in 2006 to provide housing for homeless persons being discharged from Cobb County jails. This facility, called Harmony House, will provide support for residents while they make the change from jail to becoming stable, self-supporting citizens. A range of services and counseling is provided during their stay at Harmony House.
- ❑ A mental health court program was operated.
- ❑ The Cobb Collaborative and its membership planned for an expansion of the needs assessment completed in 2005. The first phase of the assessment was completed with assistance from Kennesaw State University and provided an analysis and mapping of social services in Cobb County and the City of Marietta. In April 2005, an Executive Summary was distributed to the Collaborative. Information obtained from surveys of 895 human service community and faith based organizations was catalogued, mapped, and compared with census data to get a comprehensive view of services, population characteristics, and location of services of the most-in-need and vulnerable populations in the county. Various committees of the Cobb Collaborative, including representatives from the Policy Council on Homelessness, are analyzing and further refining the data which will be used in gaps analysis and service planning.
- ❑ Representatives of the Policy Council on Homelessness continued to meet with members of the SW Cobb Faith Partnership to discuss establishing a new shelter to serve the southwest section of the county.

While progress has been made in implementing our strategy, the following specific goals have been set for carrying out Cobb's Strategy to end chronic homelessness:

- ❑ Move persons from the street to housing resources
  - Increase the number of outreach workers to engage the population
  - Develop a low-demand shelter to accept persons who do not meet the requirements (i.e., can't pass a breathalyzer test) of established shelters
  - Increase the number of emergency shelter and transitional housing beds for chronically homeless persons
  - Expand the family reunification program
  - Identify additional funds for more overflow beds

- ❑ Stabilize persons in shelter and transitional housing; access resources to develop and maintain residential stability.
  - Assist persons in accessing mainstream benefits; streamline process
  - Increase substance abuse and mental health treatment programs at shelters and transitional housing programs
  - Increase literacy and GED resources for the chronically homeless
  - Increase job readiness skills training and specific skills training to meet the demands of the job market
  - Increase Aftercare programs to provide long-term follow-up and intervention to assist persons in maintaining housing
- ❑ Increase prevention programs
  - Develop and implement comprehensive discharge plans for covering physical health care, mental health care, and correctional systems (foster care already in place)
  - Develop and implement mental health and drug courts
  - Expand youth programs including: substance abuse education; underage drinking; education and compliance checks; mentoring programs; improve high school graduation rates
- ❑ Increase affordable housing
  - Expand the number of Shelter+Care and Section 811 beds
  - Develop additional affordable housing or SRO units

4. Homelessness Prevention—The jurisdiction must describe its planned action steps over the next year to address the individual and families with children at imminent risk of becoming homeless.

**Cobb County Response:**

Cobb County has an established network of human service agencies that provide services for families who are at-risk of becoming homeless. Among the agencies that provide special services for families are: the Center for Family Resources, the YWCA of Northwest GA, Cobb County DFCS, the Cobb Community Services Board, Jewish Family and Career Services, Feed My Lambs, Headstart, First Baptist Church of Marietta, and Sheltering Arms. These, and other partnering agencies, provide emergency rent and utility assistance, food, counseling, transportation back to family support networks, and job referrals. They also provide longer term services, such as literacy services and job training, designed to help families move toward future self-sufficiency.

Cobb continues to concentrate resources towards prevention programs for youth to prohibit the use of alcohol and drugs. Several organizations including the Drug-Free Communities Support Program, Underage Drinking Task Force, Cobb Schools Prevention and Intervention Program are working together to increase collaboration and coordination of substance abuse prevention programs in targeted communities in Cobb County. The Cobb Underage Drinking Task Force, in collaboration with local law enforcement, has been very successful in reducing the number of establishments selling/serving alcohol to minors through the use of compliance checks.

5. Discharge Coordination Policy—Explain planned activities to implement a cohesive, community-wide Discharge Coordination Policy, and how, in the coming year, the community will move toward such a policy.

Lack of housing opportunities for individuals with severe mental illness and/or physical

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disabilities has been addressed in several ways. The work of the Discharge Planning Committee and resulting allocation of FEMA funds as well as the homeless relocation program are new important components that address this population. In addition, the successful opening of Harmony House is providing services to up to five homeless individuals released from Cobb County jails. NAMI South Cobb has continued to work with other organizations through the CoC process to seek methods of developing affordable housing for severely mentally ill residents. ARC Cobb continues to seek additional Section 811 funding to increase their capacity.

### **Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG)**

(States only) Describe the process for awarding grants to State recipients, and a description of how the allocation will be made available to units of local government.

#### **Cobb County Response:**

Not Applicable – for states only.



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### Community Development

\*Please also refer to the Community Development Table in the Needs.xls workbook.

1. Identify the jurisdiction's priority non-housing community development needs eligible for assistance by CDBG eligibility category specified in the Community Development Needs Table (formerly Table 2B), public facilities, public improvements, public services and economic development.

#### **Cobb County Response:**

In PY 2007, Cobb County's non-housing community development needs projects include Public Facilities and Public Services.

<b>PY 2007 Community Development Needs</b>	<b>Proposed Amount</b>
<b>Public Facilities</b>	
General—2 Projects	\$720,000
Neighborhood Facilities—1 Project	\$680,500
Parks, Recreational Facilities—3 Projects	\$140,919
Water and Sewer Improvements—2 Projects	\$303,404
Operating Costs of Homeless/AIDS Patients Programs—5 Projects	\$108,157
<b>TOTAL Proposed Public Facilities</b>	<b>\$1,952,980</b>
<b>Public Services</b>	
Senior Services—1 Project	\$24,000
Youth Services—2 Projects	\$95,800
Abused and Neglected Children—1 Project	\$40,000
<b>TOTAL Proposed Public Services</b>	<b>\$159,800</b>
<b>TOTAL Proposed Public Facilities and Services</b>	<b>\$2,112,780</b>

2. Identify specific long-term and short-term community development objectives (including economic development activities that create jobs), developed in accordance with the statutory goals described in section 24 CFR 91.1 and the primary objective of the CDBG program to provide decent housing and a suitable living environment and expand economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons.

#### **Cobb County Response:**

During the Strategic Planning Process for the 2006-2010 Consolidated Plan, the community suggested that the most pressing non-housing issues were the need for Youth Centers, Neighborhood Centers, Abused and Neglected Children Facilities, Senior Centers, Health Facilities, Supportive Services, and an array of public services [senior services, child care services, employment training, battered and abused spouses services, and youth services]. Cobb County based long and short term objectives on those expressed concerns. The objectives are:

### **Long Term Objectives**

**PF 1 – PUBLIC FACILITIES:** To provide for the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, or installation of public facilities and improvements to:

- Meet health and safety standards (PF 1.1)
- Upgrade and improve the neighborhoods where low and moderate income families reside (PF 1.2)
- Meet the needs of special population groups (PF 1.3)

**PS 2 – PUBLIC SERVICES:** To provide the funding necessary to improve Cobb County's Public services to include:

- Child Care
- Physical and Mental Health
- Education
- Senior Services
- Transportation
- Battered and abused services for children and youth

**ED 3 - Economic Development:** provide non-capital resources needed to:

- Promote business creation and expansion for low and moderate income persons

**AD 4 - Administration/Planning/Contingencies:** To provide the administrative structure to :

- Plan and conduct community development activities
- Carry out housing and homeless activities by planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating housing and homeless programs

### **Short Term Objectives**

**PF 1.1 –** To improve existing, deteriorated public facilities and infrastructure in low and moderate-income areas to meet health and safety standards.

**PF 1.2 –** To construct new public facilities and infrastructure to serve low and moderated income areas/persons now lacking such facilities.

**PF 1.3 –** To construct, acquire, and/or renovate public facilities to meet the needs of special population groups such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, homeless persons, and persons suffering from various types of abuse.

**PS 2.1 –** To provide funding or technical assistance to assist in the implementation of programs for special population groups such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, homeless persons, and persons suffering from various types of abuse.

**PS 2.2 –** To provide funding or technical assistance to private non-profit and public agencies meeting the public service needs of the County's low and moderate income population.

**ED 3.1 –** To promote new and expanded industrial and commercial development that will provide jobs for low and moderate income persons.

**ED 3.2 –** To provide financial resources to stimulate business retention and expansion.

**ED 3.3 –** To encourage the development of and increase the opportunities for minority and female-owned businesses.

**ED 3.4–** To provide funding for new and/or improved infrastructure to leverage additional financial support from the public sector, to foster economic development, and to encourage the creation and retention of jobs for low and moderate income persons.

**AD 4.1 –** To provide the administrative structure for the implementation and management of the Community Development Block Grant Program, the Emergency Shelter Grant Program, the HOME Program, and other housing, community development and homeless programs.

The CDBG Program Office continues to receive requests for funding for parks, youth centers, senior services, housing rehabilitation, transitional, supportive housing and personal care.

## **Antipoverty Strategy**

1. Describe the actions that will take place during the next year to reduce the number of poverty level families.

### **Cobb County Response:**

Although Cobb is considered an affluent county, there are sizeable pockets of poverty throughout the county such as Mableton, Austell, and Powder Springs in southwest Cobb, the Fair Oaks community and the City of Smyrna, and also in Cities of Kennesaw and Acworth. Cobb strategies to reduce the number of families and individuals who fall under the poverty level include upgrading job skills/increasing employment and reducing the cost of living for low-income individuals and families.

#### **Upgrading Job Skills/Increasing Employment**

- ❑ Continue support of public and private human service organizations and private sector businesses who are working to stimulate increased employment among people in poverty.
- ❑ Continue support of the Microenterprise Program.
- ❑ The County Economic Development Office is working with the Kennesaw State University Small Business Development Center to develop a "business incubator" concept for the Powder Springs area.
- ❑ Cobb County will continue to support CobbWorks!, the Workforce Development Center that was constructed and started with CDBG funds.
- ❑ Cobb County will support organizations such as the Center for Family Resources and The Tommy Nobis Center, which provide training for individuals in poverty or with disabilities.
- ❑ The Cobb County Board of Education and Chattahoochee Technical College provides free GED classes through Adult and Vocational Education.
- ❑ Cobb County, through local organizations and the Red Cross, has communicated job postings for relocated persons from the Gulf Coast Region (Hurricane Katrina victims).
- ❑ The Cobb CDBG Program Office will continue to implement Section 3 policy, and will encourage housing development programs, especially programs implemented with public assistance (HOME, CDBG Housing Rehabilitation) to incorporate job-training opportunities as a part of their operations.

#### **Reducing the Cost of Living**

- ❑ Cobb County has improved its efforts to coordinate the assistance provided to families in poverty by various service agencies. The Cobb Human Services Coalition is now the Policy Council for Homelessness through the Cobb Collaborative, which reduces competition for limited funding and provides for reduced overhead for the two organizations.
- ❑ The CDBG Program Office will help these agencies to access federal, state and private resources, which can provide vitally needed services – such as food, shelter and clothing.
- ❑ Cobb County will continue to increase the availability of affordable housing for low-income families through a range of projects, such as rehabilitation and reconstruction of deteriorating homes, development of additional new Affordable Housing units, and increasing the availability of housing for first-time homebuyers through down

- payment assistance.
- ❑ Jobs are available throughout the County. In some cases, accessing those jobs has been hampered by the lack of a comprehensive transit system, which is not fully countywide. Cobb County is participating with the Atlanta Regional Commission [ARC] and GRETA to coordinate regional transit systems with local transit systems.

Through the strategies described above, and in cooperation with the agencies and nonprofit organizations noted, the CDBG Program Office will assist approximately 4,800 persons to move out of poverty over the period covered by the Consolidated Plan. Most of these persons will rise out of poverty through job training and job improvement. For example, the Center for Family Resources provides an opportunity for many of its poverty level and homeless families to acquire job training and job readiness skills that lead to permanent employment at significantly higher salary rates. Some other families will increase their income by resolving substance abuse and personal problems through counseling programs, such as those offered by The Extension, Inc. and the Cobb Community Services Board.

## NON-HOMELESS SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING

### Non-homeless Special Needs (91.220 (c) and (e))

\*Please also refer to the Non-homeless Special Needs Table in the Needs.xls workbook.

1. Describe the priorities and specific objectives the jurisdiction hopes to achieve for the period covered by the Action Plan.

#### **Cobb County Response:**

The extent of needs of special non-homeless populations is significant. Many individuals and families have mental or physical health problems that lead to housing or mobility needs. Also, these residents may have difficulty in taking advantage of services and benefits that others can utilize, such as certain job training programs. Cobb County will implement, or facilitate, programs and services in at least three areas to meet these needs:

**Cobb County will continue to bring government facilities into compliance with ADA standards.** During the period of this Consolidated Plan, it is anticipated that 25 additional facilities will be brought up to ADA compliance, making facilities and programs accessible to thousands of Cobb residents.

**Cobb County will continue to develop housing for the Special Needs Population,** which is very limited throughout Cobb County and the Consortium. Private facilities are generally not affordable for low to moderate income populations. The costs associated with personal care homes has risen drastically and is more often than not out of the price range for someone with a low to moderate income unless they qualify for Medicaid. The minimum cost of a personal care home currently exceeds \$3,000 per month, and may run more than that amount for acceptable care. Cobb will work with local nonprofit organizations, such as Cobb ARC, the Cobb Community Services Board, MUST, The Extension, Inc. and the Tommy Nobis Center to develop additional facilities for special needs population groups. These will include Shelter Plus Care and Section 811 projects (at least one project will be targeted each year).

Within the housing area, a special effort will be undertaken to develop a **facility for housing women with alcohol and/or drug addictions**, including support services. This facility may be developed through The Extension, Inc. or another agency that focuses on assisting persons with substance abuse problems.

2. Describe how Federal, State, and local public and private sector resources that are reasonably expected to be available will be used to address identified needs for the period covered by this Action Plan.

#### **Cobb County Response:**

During this Consolidated Plan period [FY 2006-2010], the CDBG Program, GUCC HOME Program, CSBG and non-profits continued support of organizations addressing non-homeless special needs.

Table #11  
Special Needs Projects

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>
Housemate Match	Senior Housing	500 Seniors and Near Homeless	CDBG
Cobb Senior Services	Senior Services – Transportation	5 Vans	CDBG
Cobb County Property Management	ADA Compliance	25 facilities	CDBG
The Extension, Inc.	Facility for Females with Alcohol/drug additions	1 facility	HOME
ARC	Disability Housing	8 additional units	HUD Section 811
Cobb Community Services Board	Support Services for Mentally Ill	25,000 Individuals	CSBG
Housing Rehab Program	Senior Housing and Persons with Disabilities	125 homes	CDBG, HOME
The Tommy Nobis Center	Services for Disabled	1 Facility	CDBG

Cobb County will continue to allocate funding to the Single-Family, **Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program, mortgage default counseling, home buyer training, fair housing services**, and other homeless prevention activities including the Discharge Coordination Policy, an effort to prevent persons released from prison from entering a homeless situation. The homeless prevention activities are supported through Emergency Shelter Grant [ESG] Program funding. The Cobb Office will also oversee the Single-Family Housing Rehabilitation Program in Cherokee County, although the program does not receive CDBG funds.

The Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MRDD) Department of the Cobb and Douglas Counties Community Services Board will provide community support for persons diagnosed with mental retardation and developmental disabilities. Also, there is a demonstrated need for supportive housing for teens and those with substance abuse problems, especially women. The Extension, Inc. is currently raising funds to procure property for a shelter specifically for women in need of supportive services.

The CDBG Program Office will continue to support the HouseMate Match Program – a housing program that reduces the cost of shelter for seniors in Cobb county who are at risk for homelessness. The program is effective in shelter cost reduction because it matches compatible people who are interested in sharing living arrangements, expenses, and household duties.

## Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS

\*Please also refer to the HOPWA Table in the Needs.xls workbook.

1. Provide a Brief description of the organization, the area of service, the name of the program contacts, and a broad overview of the range/ type of housing activities to be done during the next year.
2. Report on the actions taken during the year that addressed the special needs of persons who are not homeless but require supportive housing, and assistance for persons who are homeless.
3. Evaluate the progress in meeting its specific objective of providing affordable housing, including a comparison of actual outputs and outcomes to proposed goals and progress made on the other planned actions indicated in the strategic and action plans. The evaluation can address any related program adjustments or future plans.
4. Report on annual HOPWA output goals for the number of households assisted during the year in: (1) short-term rent, mortgage and utility payments to avoid homelessness; (2) rental assistance programs; and (3) in housing facilities, such as community residences and SRO dwellings, where funds are used to develop and/or operate these facilities. Include any assessment of client outcomes for achieving housing stability, reduced risks of homelessness and improved access to care.
5. Report on the use of committed leveraging from other public and private resources that helped to address needs identified in the plan.
6. Provide an analysis of the extent to which HOPWA funds were distributed among different categories of housing needs consistent with the geographic distribution plans identified in its approved Consolidated Plan.
7. Describe any barriers (including non-regulatory) encountered, actions in response to barriers, and recommendations for program improvement.
8. Please describe the expected trends facing the community in meeting the needs of persons living with HIV/AIDS and provide additional information regarding the administration of services to people with HIV/AIDS.
9. Please note any evaluations, studies or other assessments that will be conducted on the local HOPWA program during the next year.

### **Cobb County Response:**

Cobb County receives HOPWA funds through the City of Atlanta. The Cobb County Board of Health serves as the service provider for Cobb. However, all program objectives and planned activities are reported directly to the City of Atlanta and, therefore, are included in the Consolidated Plan for the City of Atlanta. Cobb County funding is reported under Specific HOPWA Objectives #1 following this section.

1. The Plan includes a description of the activities to be undertaken with its HOPWA Program funds to address priority unmet housing needs for the eligible population. Activities will assist persons who are not homeless but require supportive housing, such as efforts to prevent low-income individuals and families from becoming homeless and may address the housing needs of persons who are homeless in order to help homeless



persons make the transition to permanent housing and independent living. The plan would identify any obstacles to meeting underserved needs and summarize the priorities and specific objectives, describing how funds made available will be used to address identified needs.

2. The Plan must establish annual HOPWA output goals for the planned number of households to be assisted during the year in: (1) short-term rent, mortgage and utility payments to avoid homelessness; (2) rental assistance programs; and (3) in housing facilities, such as community residences and SRO dwellings, where funds are used to develop and/or operate these facilities. The plan can also describe the special features or needs being addressed, such as support for persons who are homeless or chronically homeless. These outputs are to be used in connection with an assessment of client outcomes for achieving housing stability, reduced risks of homelessness and improved access to care.
3. For housing facility projects being developed, a target date for the completion of each development activity must be included and information on the continued use of these units for the eligible population based on their stewardship requirements (e.g. within the ten-year use periods for projects involving acquisition, new construction or substantial rehabilitation).
4. The Plan includes an explanation of how the funds will be allocated including a description of the geographic area in which assistance will be directed and the rationale for these geographic allocations and priorities. Include the name of each project sponsor, the zip code for the primary area(s) of planned activities, amounts committed to that sponsor, and whether the sponsor is a faith-based and/or grassroots organization.
5. The Plan describes the role of the lead jurisdiction in the eligible metropolitan statistical area (EMSA), involving (a) consultation to develop a metropolitan-wide strategy for addressing the needs of persons with HIV/AIDS and their families living throughout the EMSA with the other jurisdictions within the EMSA; (b) the standards and procedures to be used to monitor HOPWA Program activities in order to ensure compliance by project sponsors of the requirements of the program.
6. The Plan includes the certifications relevant to the HOPWA Program.

## **Specific HOPWA Objectives**

Describe how Federal, State, and local public and private sector resources that are reasonably expected to be available will be used to address identified needs for the period covered by the Action Plan.

### **Cobb County Response:**

In 2007, Cobb County will receive \$106,042 in HOPWA funds. In 2006, Cobb County received an additional two year grant for \$108,729.45. This was down significantly from the 2004-2005 grant of \$195,000. In order to qualify for housing assistance through HOPWA, the person must prove through eviction or foreclose notice that they are in danger of becoming homeless.

## Other Narrative

Cobb County is a leader in the implementation of Performance Measurements for Action Plan programs. The PY 2007 Action Plan begins the third year of reporting Performance Measurements. Residents of Cobb County have access to this concise report on program results to allow them to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

In a further attempt to provide the residents of Cobb County and the GUCC with current information on the availability of program funding and program performance, Cobb County will expand the use of its website in PY 2007. The website will serve as an additional public forum providing access to materials relevant to current and previous years' allocation of funds and projects. The public and any interested parties including applicants and other agencies will have access to information including current subrecipients and project specifics and photos, and information and applications to apply for future CDBG/HOME/ESG funds.

The website will also include documentation of the Cobb County Citizen Participation Plan, a listing of eligible activities when applying for CDBG/HOME/ESG funds, access to reports such as the 2006-2010 Consolidated Plan, the 2005 CAPER, and the 2007 Annual Action Plan. Other reports such as the 2006 Annual Action Plan will be available in an archives section. The website will also offer access to agendas and minutes from public hearings. Finally, the website will be offered with a Frequently Asked Questions [FAQ} section to provide answers to inquiries regarding the programs such as application deadlines and program guidelines and specifics.